

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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Recreation and Visitor Serving Facilities

The Coastal Act places high priority on the protection and maximization of recreation and visitor serving land uses, including lower cost facilities. LCPs certified almost 20 years ago will have outdated information on visitor use and demand. As a result, your LCP may not reserve adequate areas and infrastructure capacity to meet current and projected recreation and visitor facility needs.

➤ **Overview: What should an updated LCP include?**

LCP policies should maximize access to recreation and visitor facilities as a priority use under the Coastal Act. There may be obvious areas of overlap with your Public Access component.

Review the principal Coastal Act policies concerning recreation and visitor serving uses at Sections 30212.5, 30213, 30220 through 30224 and 30250 and 30250. These statutes can be found at:
<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/coa/act.pdf>.

- ❑ Update the inventory and map of existing shoreline and near-shore recreational areas and facilities and support facilities (ex, beaches, harbors, parking lots/spaces, visitor commercial).
- ❑ Evaluate current information on the use of, and demand for, recreation areas and facilities. Has development authorized since certification adequately met the demand? Update estimates of future demand.
- ❑ Review existing areas designated for recreation and visitor facilities, especially oceanfront lands. Review patterns of development. Do visitor serving commercial uses remain a priority use over private residential, or general industrial and commercial land uses? Are there new measures available to ensure that such visitor uses will remain a priority use?
- ❑ Consider the need to designate and zone additional areas for recreation and visitor facilities to meet new estimates for population growth and projected demand.
- ❑ Are more areas for upland facilities needed to support expanded recreational water use?
- ❑ Update the inventory and map of existing visitor accommodations (campground, RV parks, motels, inns), by type, capacity, ownership and price range. Consider expanding designated areas to ensure a range of affordable facilities.
- ❑ Update circulation/transportation facilities policies to increase alternative transportation and parking to serve recreational developments. If new development of affordable overnight accommodations is not occurring, means to travel to and/or park at the coast in order to recreate will become more critical.

- ❑ Update the LCP to identify future public agency acquisitions, development or redevelopment, and management of public recreation and visitor-serving facilities.

➤ ***What are some new issues in recreation and visitor serving planning and regulation?***

◆ **Condominium Hotels/Timeshares**

New development of overnight facilities that are owned as private residential units but managed as part of a hotel rental pool are a more recent development trend in the California coastal zone. This type of overnight accommodation has an untested track record in ensuring protection of public visitor-serving facilities as a priority use. The Commission has addressed this emerging trend for “condo hotels” (or other types of fractional ownership of overnight units) in a special workshop and several recent permits and LCP Amendments. The Executive Director has also issued interim guidance to local governments for addressing this trend: <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/legal/condo-hotels.pdf>

In updating the LCP if such uses are to be considered, it is critical to include adequate protections for visitor overnight uses in such developments, as well as mitigation of impacts to these priorities uses and prohibitions against converting existing hotel units to such residential uses. You can view workshop materials at <http://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2006/8/W3-8-2006.pdf>

As this issue develops, new projects will be evaluated with whatever new information is available.

◆ **Recreational Facility Upgrades and Conversions**

A current trend along the coast is for property owners to propose upgrades or conversions of their overnight facilities. Such changes can result in narrower ranges in price and type of overnight accommodations including the loss of lower-coast visitor-serving facilities in the coastal zone. This problem is compounded by the fact that new development proposals are often for high-end hotels. As you update your LCP, go beyond designating appropriate areas for overnight accommodations. Include policies and standards to ensure an appropriate mix of accommodations over time. Mitigations for allowing luxury or higher priced accommodations could include construction or retention of lower cost facilities such as cabins, a tent campground or hostel, and more affordable hotel/motel developments.